News Release
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Sen. Laura Toy, Women in Government applaud FDA decision to approve HPV vaccine

LANSING – A powerful new tool in the fight against cervical cancer has recently been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, said state Sen. Laura M. Toy, 6th District.

"The approval of a vaccine to prevent certain types of the human papillomavirus, the virus that causes cervical cancer, represents a great breakthrough in medical science," Sen. Toy said. "This is the first time that a vaccine has been licensed specifically to prevent cancer."

In clinical trials the vaccine has proven to be 100 percent effective in preventing infection with two specific types of the human papillomavirus (HPV) which together are responsible for approximately 70 percent of all cervical cancer cases.

Toy serves as a state director for Women in Government, a national non-profit, bipartisan organization representing female state legislators that has been advocating for FDA approval of the vaccine.

"More than 3,700 women die from cervical cancer in the United States each year," Sen. Toy said. "Now that the FDA has determined the safety and efficacy of this vaccine, we must take the necessary steps to ensure that women in our state have appropriate access to this life-saving medicine."

Approximately 6.2 million new infections from HPV occur each year, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. While 90 percent of infections clear within 2 years, persistent infection with "high-risk" strains of HPV can lead to the development of cervical cancer.

Marketed under the brand name GARDASIL®, the new vaccine was developed by Merck & Co., Inc. of Whitehouse Station, New Jersey.

Women interested in learning more are encouraged to contact their health-care provider.

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